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ABSTRACT

This study compared the reading interests and habits of American and Canadian senior high school students and examined the extent to which the English curricula in their schools coincide with those reading interests. Questionnaires were distributed to a total of 680 students in three schools (urban, suburban, and rural) in the New Britain, Connecticut, area and in three similar schools in the Edmonton, Alberta (Canada) area. English teachers and school librarians were also surveyed in regard to student reading interests and English curricula. Results of the study are reported according to the following categories: the degree to which students indicate they like to read and the number of books read per month; the most-liked and least-liked book titles; the most popular book categories; students' preference for paperback, rather than hardbound, books; ways in which students learn about book titles; the interaction of reading books and viewing movies made from the books; the extent to which students read comic books, newspapers, and magazines; student opinions about the school library; and student opinions and suggestions regarding the English curriculum in their schools. (Author/GW)

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE READING INTERESTS AND HABITS OF GRADE 12 STUDENTS IN SELECTED CANADIAN AND AMERICAN SCHOOLS

by

Deborah Ann Stachelek

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The Central Connecticut State College Alumni Association
in conjunction with
The Central Connecticut State College Research Department
Dr. Donald Gallo, faculty advisor
September, 1976

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The project began approximately 11:32 a.m. on a Thursday morning in my "Literature for Young Adults" class, a required course for all English Education majors at Central Connecticut State College. By that time of the week, I inevitably succumb to a bit of daydreaming -- even in favorite English classes.

The course exposes prospective teachers to the extensive range of books that are available for junior high - high school readers and that are characteristic of a new and growing genre of books entitled Adolescent Literature. The course also makes hungry English majors starving: wanting to read all the books that they now know about and, in my case, burning with curiosity as to whether adolescents know, like and read such books, whether they read other types of books or reading materials as well, whether they read at all, and whether all the theories, studies, and prophecies concerning adolescent reading interests that I have been exposed to in English, Psychology and Education courses really hold in accuracy and in actuality.

My daydreaming continued as I remembered my experiences the previous 1974-1975 academic year as Central Connecticut State College's representative in the Student Senate Exchange Program to the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I remembered the similarities and the differences of Alberta and Connecticut.

In Alberta, the rich, black podzol soil and the light rustle of wheat fields; the stark, vast prairies of cattle ranches and farms, rimmed with the awesome, blue Rocky Mountains; the biting, below-zero weather and the Northern Lights shimmering over the snow, the miles of snow and days of snow and nights of snow and

months of snow and snow and snow...; the little towns of 4,000 or less people surrounded and isolated by expanses of yellow prairie; the slower pace of the West and the crisp, British-like Canadian accent; and the thrill of studying and living in the one half million-peopled, oil industry center and provincial capital, Edmonton.

In Connecticut, the large, full hardwood oaks and maples radiant in autumn hues; the miles of plush, rolling green hills dotted with white colonial houses, red barns, small truck farms and roadside produce stands and rimmed with the sandy beaches and shore marinas along Long Island Sound; the dampness and slush of New England winters and the humid, clothes-clinging heat of hazy summers; the highly industrialized and populated metropolis of the Greater Hartford area with its sprawling suburbia and crisscrossed network of highways and commuter traffic; the fast, exciting pace of the East and the distinctive Connecticut Yankee twang; and the comfortable, old exposure to my home of New England and Connecticut.

With such comparisons and contrasts between Alberta and Connecticut came questions about comparable high school reading interests and habits in both areas. The daydream completed itself later at coffee that afternoon when before me sat an article in the campus magazine, calling for prospective undergraduate research projects to be sponsored by the Central Connecticut State College Alumni Association. With three days left to the deadline in which to solidify my thoughts and to apply for the program, my love of research was stirred once more, my coffee grew cold and my mind has been reeling about student reading interests ever since.

Purposes of the Project

As an English major in a teacher-preparation program with a reading concentrate, I have a love not only for reading literature and reading itself but also for sharing and teaching reading and literature with and to others. Student reading interests and habits are important determinants of the high school English curriculum. The study of students' direct responses to specific questions about their reading will offer a more relevant and comprehensive guide to what teachers should keep in mind in their choice and teaching of English materials.

Thus, the project has definite value for the teaching profession and for fellow students and myself as prospective teachers. For myself, the project offers the firsthand opportunity to explore this area of student reading interests and habits in more depth by practical experience in research rather than through the limited vicariousness of education and reading courses; to enrich my understanding of what comprises the English curriculum, of what objectives must be met and of what students want and need to read. For the cooperating organizations involved, the project offers the University of Alberta, Central Connecticut State College, and the high school administrators, teachers and students in the six schools that are studied, additional insight about comparative student reading interests and habits on the national, regional and local levels, in how their individual school curriculum stands in relation to others, in how they in turn compare with external criteria (national studies about student reading interests in the high school), and in how well their objectives meet what students want and need to read.

Procedure of the Project

I examined six high schools in total (three within the New Britain, Connecticut area and three within the Edmonton, Alberta area); the three schools in each area were chosen as representatives of urban, suburban and rural environments.

After having gone through the Connecticut State Register and Manual 1975, I chose the three Connecticut towns/cities and respective schools on the basis of their population and type of environment: New Britain* with about 80,500 people as the urban area with strong affiliations in the hardware industry and the home of Central Connecticut State College; Avon with about 9,400 people as the suburban area, a solely residential area within the 25-30 mile shadow of New Britain and Hartford; and Durham with about 4,700 people as the rural area that caters primarily to small farming, small manufacturing and commuters to area cities.

All three schools have a fairly similar enrollment yet each is seen in a different perspective because of the city/town in which it is located: Pulaski High School with approximately 800 students is one of two New Britain city high schools; Avon High

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*Originally I had chosen Hartford, Connecticut, the state capital and insurance center of the world, as a better representative of an urban school (better in that it is more comparable to Edmonton, the urban representative of Alberta in this study), but the Hartford school system refused me permission to conduct research in a Hartford high school. However, New Britain is a populated and industrialized center within sight of Hartford and considered part of the Greater Hartford area and serves adequately as an urban representative in the project.

School with approximately 700 students is the only high school in the town; and Coginchaug Regional High School with approximately 675 students is the area high school for both Durham and Middlefield.

The three high schools in Alberta were chosen, approved and the research procedure arranged for by the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education, Division of Field Experiences. The three Albertan town/cities include: Edmonton with about one half million people as the urban area, provincial capital, center of Alberta's large oil industry and home of the University of Alberta; Sherwood Park with about 8,000 people as the suburban and residential area that was developed within fifteen miles of Edmonton for commuting Edmontonians; and Stony Plain with with about 1000-2500 people as the rural area, also fifteen miles from Edmonton but with its core residents being farmers of long-established agricultural interests.

Population figures for the Albertan high schools include: Victoria Composite high School with approximately 1400-1600 students; Salisbury Composite High School with approximately 1400 students; and Memorial Composite High School with approximately 600 students. Unlike the Connecticut schools, the Albertan school populations do not correlate with town/city populations ie. the urban and suburban schools, Victoria and Salisbury Composite High Schools respectively, have approximately the same number of students. However, like Connecticut, the Albertan rural school has the least number of students and the urban school is one of many city high schools.

Having chosen and obtained permission to conduct research in the six high schools, I distributed questionnaires concerning student reading interests and habits to the anticipated 150-200 students per school (the amount depended upon the size and capabilities of each school). Originally, I had planned to question solely Grade 12 students; however, due to school size, capabilities and type of curriculum (certain English departments plan their courses along other distinctions such as the elective system rather than by grade level), I distributed the questionnaires to upperclassmen in Grades 11 and 12 (with some minimal overlap into Grade 10 when necessary).

Actual population figures concerning the distribution of questionnaires to each of the schools including sex, grade and age distinctions are as follows.

Connecticut Rural
Coginchaug Regional
High School

	MALE GRADE		FEMALE GRADE		
AGE	11	12	11	12	TOTAL
16	2	1	15	2	20
17	2	15	6	27	50
18	0	5	0	3	8
19	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	4	21	22	32	79

Connecticut Suburban
Avon High School

	MALE GRADE			FEMALE GRADE			
AGE	10	11	12	10	11	12	TOTAL
15	1	2	0	5	1	0	9
16	0	21	0	0	11	0	32
17	0	0	14	0	1	17	32
18	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	1	23	16	5	13	17	75

Connecticut Urban
Pulaski Senior High School

AGE	MALE GRADE 11	MALE GRADE 12	FEMALE GRADE 11	FEMALE GRADE 12	TOTAL
16	1	0	0	0	1
17	0	32	1	50	83
18	0	34	0	29	63
19	0	0	0	6	6
20	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	1	66	1	86	154

Alberta Rural
Memorial Composite High School

AGE	MALE GRADE 11	MALE GRADE 12	FEMALE GRADE 11	FEMALE GRADE 12	TOTAL
16	0	1	2	2	5
17	1	30	3	29	63
18	0	20	0	11	31
19	0	1	0	2	3
TOTAL	1	52	5	44	102

Alberta Suburban
Salisbury Composite High School

AGE	MALE GRADE 11	MALE GRADE 12	FEMALE GRADE 11	FEMALE GRADE 12	TOTAL
16	0	2	2	2	6
17	2	32	4	22	60
18	0	24	0	15	39
19	0	3	0	1	4
20	0	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	2	63	6	40	111

Alberta Urban
Victoria Composite
High School

AGE	MALE GRADE 11	MALE GRADE 12	FEMALE GRADE 11	FEMALE GRADE 12	TOTAL
15	3	0	1	0	4
16	11	0	17	0	28
17	7	20	14	32	73
18	2	11	0	19	32
19	1	9	0	5	15
20	0	3	0	0	3
?	1	1	0	2	4
TOTAL	25	44	32	58	159

As the totals indicate, there is a good degree of similarity among the 680 students questioned: a fairly even amount of male (319 responses) and female (361 responses) students, a majority of seventeen year olds and a majority of Grade 12 students. The distribution between Alberta and Connecticut is not too different; I obtained 372 from Alberta and 308 from Connecticut. Thus, the comparative basis of the study holds.

I also distributed questionnaires to English teachers and librarians in these schools in order to measure further the student reading interests and habits and the extent to which the English department curriculum, reading materials, library resources, and methods of teaching meet these student interests. The teacher/librarian responses from the participating schools are as follows:

SCHOOL	TEACHERS	LIBRARIANS
Coginchaug Regional High School	1 (conducted by personal interview)	1 (conducted by personal interview)
Avon High School	1 (conducted by personal interview)	1 (conducted by personal interview)
Pulaski Senior High School	2	1 (conducted by personal interview)
Memorial Composite High School	2	1

SCHOOL	TEACHER	LIBRARIAN
Salisbury Composite High School	2	0
Victoria Composite High School	2	0

These teacher/librarian responses are not mandatory and do not constitute a vital part of the research project, but only serve as a further understanding and clarification of student responses. Since the study concerns student responses, the limited number of teacher/librarian responses is not crucial to the project. While there are understandably more English teachers and possibly more than one librarian in each school, I asked each school to limit their responses to two teachers (preferably the teachers of the polled students) and one librarian.

Along with compiling the results of this investigation, I compared my findings with some national studies concerning student reading interests in order to draw more comprehensive conclusions concerning student reading interests and habits in these areas.

.Interpretation of the Project

Beyond comparing the results of this project with national findings of similar projects, a few words must be said in regard to how I interpret each questionnaire. While it would be advantageous and informative in some cases to study each questionnaire as an isolated profile of a particular reader, this project is more concerned with finding overall similarities, differences and distinctions between the geographical areas concerned. Thus, the compilation of results is horizontal rather than vertical. I also have distinguished further the sex of each school's set of responses, a distinction which is particularly important in certain questions. Other distinctions (ie. grade, age) were too minutely varied to provide substantive conclusions in a research project of this limited size.

Lastly, this study does not claim in any way to be an encompassing or a partial conclusion about reading interests and habits of Grade 12 students, in themselves, in any of the schools, in the geographical areas or in the involved countries. (For in none of these areas are all students polled; even if all were polled, limited answers to questionnaires do not present complete information). This study is rather a guide toward some similarities and differences of the agencies involved, a guide toward what some students in Connecticut and in Alberta feel about reading, what their reading interests and habits tend to be comparatively on a local, regional and national level, and to what extent they feel their English classes match their interests, wants and needs.

The Study

Perhaps the best place to begin is at the very core of the students' feelings about the word "Reading." I asked students simply "Do you like to read?" without qualifying the kind of reading. Students had three possible answers to choose: "Yes, definitely;" "Sometimes, depending on the material;" and "Not very much." The results are easiest seen by these tables.

Percentages Male/Male Students	Ct. Rural	Ct. Suburb.	Ct. Urban	Al. Rural	Al. Suburb.	Al. Urban	Total
Yes, definitely	24	38	24	17	28	22	25
Sometimes, depending on the material	52	50	60	55	45	58	54
Not very much	24	12	15	21	27	17	19
No answer	0	0	1	7	0	3	2

Percentages Female/Female Students	Ct. Rural	Ct. Suburb.	Ct. Urban	Al. Rural	Al. Suburb.	Al. Urban	Total
Yes, definitely	39	60	32	47	50	34	41
Sometimes, depending on the material	50	40	55	41	39	44	46
Not very much	9	0	10	12	11	10	9
No answer	2	0	3	0	0	12	4

	Males	Females	Total
Yes, definitely	11	22	33
Sometimes, depending on the material	25	25	50
Not very much	9	5	14
No answer	1	2	3
Total	46	54	100

The shaded areas indicate where the greatest number of responses in each school occur. Half of the total male and the total female responses fall in the "Sometimes" category. However, a substantial difference occurs among females. In the suburban Ct., and the rural and suburban Al. schools, at least half or more than half of the female responses fall in the "Yes, definitely" category. Similarly, greater percentages of males than females in all types of schools and in both countries do not like to read very much.

No substantial differences occur among the total male or female responses in terms of national and/or regional differences. One local difference appears in the suburban Ct. school. It is interesting to note that not one suburban Ct. female chose the "Not very much" category. The greatest percentage of "Yes" female readers is in the suburban Ct. school with 60% suburban Ct. females and 28% all females. The suburban males also pose the highest ratio of "Yes" readers with 38% suburban Ct. males

and 20% all males. Similarly, both Ct. and Al. suburban schools lead the way with most "Yes" readers in the individual male and female responses as well as in the total responses. Both schools are representatives of the suburban area leading one to assume that the suburban students tend to like reading more while the urban students seem to enjoy reading least.

Beyond asking students whether they like to read or not, I asked students what they consider the best book(s) that they have ever read. While the answers are as varied as the readers themselves (a total of 492 titles appeared), certain trends become apparent. The top 81 choices of students in all six schools are listed on the following chart.

Top Best Books*

JAWS	51	LOVE STORY	7
THE OUTSIDERS	25	1984	
THE EXORCIST	24	TRILOGY	
HELTER SKELTER	23	AIRPORT	6
THE HOBBIT		THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE	
ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST	21	CHRISTY	
		THE CHRYSALIDS	
THE GODFATHER	18	JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL	
LORD OF THE RINGS		MACBETH	
GONE WITH THE WIND	16	THE OTHER	
ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH		A SEPARATE PEACE	
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD	15	THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW	
THE CATCHER IN THE RYE	14	BALL FOUR	5
THE HOLY BIBLE	13	CALL OF THE WILD	
SERPICO	12	DEATH BE NOT PROUD	
SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE		DUNE	
ALIVE	11	A FAREWELL TO ARMS	
BLESS THE BEASTS AND THE CHILDREN		FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON (CHARLIE)	
		GO ASK ALICE	
PAPILLON		NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA	
SYBIL		RICH MAN, POOR MAN	
ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT	10	SUMMER OF '42	
		ZORBA THE GREEK	
THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA		THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN	4
SUNSHINE	9		
BRIAN'S SONG	8	AGATHA CHRISTIE novels	
LORD OF THE FLIES		BRAVE NEW WORLD	
QB VII		THE CRUCIBLE	
THE DAY OF THE JACKAL	7	DIBS - IN SEARCH OF SELF	
EXODUS		THE GREAT GATSBY	

*The numbers that follow the book titles indicate the number of responses from the total six schools.

THE HAPPY HOOKER	4	THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK
MR. AND MRS. BO JO JONES		DR. ZHIVAGO
MRS. MIKE		EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS books
ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF IVAN DENISOVITCH		THE GOOD EARTH
		THE GREAT ESCAPE
2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY		THE HARRAD EXPERIMENT
WEST SIDE STORY		I AM THIRD
WUTHERING HEIGHTS		JANE EYRE
THE AMBASSADOR	3	MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN
THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN		THE REINCARNATION OF PETER PROUD
BLACK LIKE ME		THE SCARLET LETTER
CAT'S CRADLE		THE STING
CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY		TO SIR WITH LOVE

No one book received a majority of the responses and a good number of titles appeared once in a school, area and/or in the entire study (which are not on the chart). A prominent majority of these "one appearance" titles, nevertheless, have a strong similarity: they comprise non-fiction and fiction bestsellers, adolescent literature and books based upon or made into current movies. At the head of the list stands Jaws which drew 51 responses from both males and females in all six schools. Five other titles drew responses from both males and females in all six schools: The Exorcist, The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings, The Holy Bible, and Serpico. The Outsiders and Helter Skelter appeared in four and five of the six schools respectively. The rest of the leading titles appeared in some but not all six schools and in both male and female responses.

Some titles drew solely female responses: Once is Not Enough, Sybil, QB VII, Airport, The Chrysalids, The Other, Flowers for Algernon (Charlie), Go Ask Alice, Summer of'42, Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones, Dibs - In Search of Self, The Happy Hooker, Mrs. Mike, and Wuthering Heights. Three of such solely female response books appeared in one school alone: A Farewell to Arms at the urban Ct. school, Rich Man, Poor Man at the urban Ct. school and Dune at the suburban Al. school.

Only one title drew solely male responses at the suburban Ct. and Al. and the urban Ct. schools, Ball Four. Sex differences are notable in isolated responses, particularly in book series where by a clear majority, more males read books and/or reading materials in series. One Albertan male noted that he had read all twenty-two books in the science fiction Gor series as well as books in the science fiction Conan series and the Lynn Carter series, and the science fiction-fantasy L. Sprauge de Campe books. Series in other responses include the Alistair MacLean series, the Zane Grey western series, the Edgar Rice Bourroughs science fiction books, the Falconhurst Fancy fiction series and the Carlos Castroneda anthropology/philosophy books. With the exception of the last two, all are Albertan male responses.

Sex differences also are clearly noted in hobby/interest affiliated books. Males prefer motorcycling, car and sports books; females give more varied responses in this area. Females more than males tended to note bestsellers, adolescent literature and movie titles to the exclusion of hobby/interest books.

Classics do not fare very well with students as a "best" book. In the Top Best Book list, only Macbeth and Wuthering Heights appear. The contemporary classics are more popular such as: The Old Man and the Sea, A Farewell to Arms, A Separate Peace, The Crucible, The Great Gatsby, To Kill a Mockingbird and The Catcher in the Rye. Nevertheless, some isolated responses concerning classics appear and are worth noting. No distinctions are discernible concerning country, type of school or sex. The following classics were listed as the "best" book: Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice, Ethan Frome, Little Women, Great Expectations, A Tale of Two Cities, Hamlet, Macbeth, Mutiny on the Bounty,

Moby Dick, The Scarlet Letter, The Red Badge of Courage, Dracula, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls and The Old Man and the Sea.

Seventy-four percent of the Top Best Books as well as a major majority of other titles mentioned by the students are books that inspired movies or that were made from movies. Some of the more popular titles include: Jaws, The Exorcist, Helter Skelter, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, The Godfather, Gone With the Wind, To Kill a Mockingbird, The Day of the Jackal, Papillon and Brian's Song.

While no large local or national majorities occur, some distinctions appear.* Both the American and the Canadian students are attracted particularly to American authors (older British classics such as Shakespeare's Hamlet and Macbeth and Dicken's Great Expectations and A Tale of Two Cities and the Russian novel Solzhenitsyn's One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch are very minimal exceptions). However, Canadian students understandably noted titles of Canadian authors but not one American student noted a favorite Canadian title as Canadian students listed American titles. Some of the more distinctive Canadian titles include: The Chrysalids (which ranks in the Top Best Books), Who Has Seen the Wind, The Trudeau Papers, Traplines North, The National Dream and The Last Canadian.

Some titles, while not Canadian by authorship, nevertheless, were noted only by the Canadian students, they being: To Sir With Love, QB VII, Lord of the Rings, 1984, The Lost Horizon, Dune, Cry, the Beloved Country, and the Edgar Rice Bourroughs books.

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*I note the following information as "American" and "Canadian" because the differences appear to be national rather than regional; no distinction characteristic of Ct. or Al. is apparent.

Similarly, some titles appeared only in the American schools, they being: Rich Man, Poor Man, Trilogy, The Happy Hooker, A Farewell to Arms, Alive, The Chrystal Cave, Future Shock, I Am Third and Cat's Cradle.

While I have made some generalizations about favorite books of the students in these six high schools, the clearest, most evident and certainly most accurate deduction concerning these students' favorite books is that these high school students do read and they read very widely, that no one book is the favorite of most, and that this uniqueness and variety shows more beautifully how rich and how well used the current reading market is to high school students. Not only did 90% of the students list a favorite book, but also some listed as many as ten best books ever read. And there are always those isolated souls who never cease to amaze the researcher with their unique and endlessly varied answers: for two Albertan males, Webster's Dictionary and the Edmonton Telephone Book stand as their favorite books!

Variety is again the first inference that one draws in reviewing student responses to what is the "worst" book ever read. Many of the same titles that appear on the "best" book list appear on the "worst" list as well, such as Jaws and The Exorcist (the first and third books on the best book list). Nearly all the titles mentioned at least once as the best book are also mentioned as the worst book and new titles appear, such as President Fu-Manchu, The Mayor of Casterbridge and Billy Budd. The top 36 choices of students in all six schools are listed on the following chart.

Top Worst Books*

HEART OF DARKNESS	17	THE SECRET SHARER	
THE AMBASSADOR	16	STORY AND STRUCTURE (text)	
SHAKESPEARE	15	A FAREWELL TO ARMS	4
HARLEQUIN ROMANCES	11	HAMLET	
THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA	10	THE HARDY BOYS	
THE CATCHER IN THE RYE	9	I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN	
DEATH OF A SALESMAN		LORD OF THE FLIES	
THE ELECTRIC KOOL-AID ACID TEST		LOVE STORY	
THE GREAT GATSBY		1984	
AS I LAY DYING	8	THE PEARL	
THE SCARLET LETTER		BILLY BUDD	3
THE EXORCIST	7	THE FISHERMAN AND THE SEA	
JAWS		GO ASK ALICE	
A TALE OF TWO CITIES		JULIUS CAESAR	
WUTHERING HEIGHTS		THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE	
ANIMAL FARM	5	PRESIDENT FU-MANCHU	
BRAVE NEW WORLD		SLEEP 2,3,4	
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN		TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD	

In glancing at the Top Worst Book list, one notices that fewer books appear and that those appearing have fewer votes per title. This absence parallels the absence of answers on the questionnaires where 41% of the students left this item blank. While some of these unanswered questions may be due to oversight, one may assume that they also note students' inability to remember the worst books because some of these unanswered questions are qualified with such comments as "none," "I never finish a bad book" or with lines and/or "x's" drawn through the answer space. While nothing can be absolutely inferred, it is interesting to note that the urban Ct. students provide the largest body of replies to this question; they tended to reply more often and at more length about the "worst" book, indicating that the urban Ct. students seem to have if not only a strong dislike of certain books but also a ready list of specific worst book titles.

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*The numbers that follow the book titles indicate the number of responses from the total six schools.

Some answers here are different than the kinds of titles that appear in the best book list: books such as English, Math and Business Law texts; comments such as "Just about all books" or "The ones in English class;" and book categories such as sex, westerns, romance, gothic, history, science fiction and murder/ mystery books. While these answers do not provide specific titles, they do indicate the types of books that some students dislike strongly.

While less explicit deductions can be made from the worst book list, nevertheless, a few points stand out. The first two books on the list have both male and female votes but are solely from one school, they being: Heart of Darkness with 11% of the urban Ct. students and The Ambassador with 14% of the suburban Al. students. Other titles with this distinction include: As I Lay Dying, 10% rural Ct.; Wuthering Heights 5%, Go Tell It On The Mountain, 3%, and The Secret Sharer 5% urban Ct.; Brave New World 5% and I Never Promised You a Rose Garden 5% rural Al.; Story and Structure text 3% urban Al.

Other "worst" books with minimal but evident 1% to 5% of a particular school's votes include: The Mayor of Casterbridge, To Kill a Mockingbird, Julius Caesar, Sleep 2,3,4, The Fisherman and the Sea, On the Beach, The Godfather, West Side Story, Ethan Frome, The Sun Also Rises, Walden, and Cry, the Beloved Country. Since no further evidence supports that certain regions dislike certain books, the appearance of titles limited to one school suggests that some students are not satisfied with books read or suggested in their English classes.

The only books that are noted by students of all the schools solely in one country and thus shows national preference are the

Harlequin Romance series, Who Has Seen the Wind and The Chrysalids in the Canadian schools; no American tendencies appear.

Sex distinctions are less evident in this category. Sole female responses reject the books: I Never Promised You a Rose Garden, the Nancy Drew books, A Farewell to Arms, The Fisherman and the Sea and Go Ask Alice while sole male responses reject the books: The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, A Red Badge of Courage, the Hardy Boys books, Walden, Cry, the Beloved Country and Who Has Seen the Wind.

One deduction stands clearly above all the rest: many of the polled high school students do not like classics (both old and modern). Shakespeare, whether noted by name or by his works, is the top "worst" book that is noted by both sexes of four schools (excluding the rural and suburban Ct. schools). Other classics on the worst book list include: Heart of Darkness, The Old Man and the Sea, Death of A Salesman, The Scarlet Letter, As I Lay Dying, Wuthering Heights, A Tale of Two Cities, The Great Gatsby, The Pearl, and A Farewell to Arms.

Other classics not on the worst book list because they received only one vote are still worth mentioning because they show the scope of classic titles mentioned as the worst book ever read: The Red Badge of Courage, Great Expectations, Dracula, The Crucible, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Hard Times, Winesburg, Ohio, Tom Jones, The Stranger, The Return of the Native, Ethan Frome, The House of the Seven Gables, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and the short stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne. No sex, national, regional or local distinctions are apparent. The dislike of classics is general to many of the high school students.

The only majority vote (67%) that the students are in agreement on is that there are bad books and that they feel strongly enough about them to note them. Yet unlike their responses to the "best" book question, answers in the "worst" book category are more sparce; no one lists as much as ten "worst" books. These students seem to feel that there are bad books but far less than the number of good books (and a nice observation for this researcher to make!).

Having established what the students consider as the best and the worst books that they have read, an examination of what categories are the most popular serves to classify the most popular titles and reading interests. Looking at the total responses, the most popular categories in order of importance are as follows: Adventure, Mystery, Sports, Nonfiction, Science Fiction, Romance, Youth/Teenagers, Sex, Occult, Biography/Autobiography, Psychology, Drama, War, Animals, Classics, Poetry, Historical Fiction, Myth, How-to-do, Religious, Black, Indian, Puerto Rican and Chicano. Percentages rank from Adventure with 33% of the total votes to Chicano with 1% of the total votes.

The most popular categories for males in order of importance are: Sports, Adventure, Science Fiction, Mystery, Nonfiction, Sex, War, Occult, Biography/Autobiography, Youth/Teenagers, How-to-do, Animals, Myth, Drama, Classical, Historical Fiction, Psychology, Poetry, Religion, Black, Indian, Romance, Puerto Rican and Chicano.

The most popular categories for females in order of importance are: Romance, Mystery, Adventure, Youth/Teenagers, Nonfiction, Psychology, Drama, Occult, Biography/Autobiography, Science Fiction, Sex, Animals, Poetry, Sports, Classical, Historical

Fiction, Religious, Myth, Black, War, How-to-do, Indian, Puerto Rican and Chicano.

Sex preferences and popular topics appear when one compares the top five categories of each school. Adventure, the most favored topic with 33% of the total votes, is the only unanimous topic for all six schools. (It ranks from second to fourth place in all responses except with suburban and urban Al. males where it holds first place). Mystery also is in the top five categories in all response categories except the rural Ct. males who prefer Sex books more. Nonfiction is regarded in the top five list in all responses except the urban Ct. males, the rural Al. females and the suburban Al. males and females.(This category holds fourth place in total responses and third place in the individual sexes' replies). Sports stands out as the only all male response choice and ranks third in total responses. Science Fiction, also an all-male response choice is chosen by most males except suburban Ct. males. Other lesser ranked categories that males prefer over females include: Drama (8% to 5%), Classical (7% to 2%), Occult (11% to 3%), Myth (8% to 2%) and How-to-do (10% to 4%).

Female preferences are evident also. Romance, ranking sixth in the total responses, is not only the first choice of all females but also the first female choice in four of the six schools. Females also regard the Youth/Teenagers category more importantly than males; this category stands in the top five categories with all but the suburban Ct. females who find Biography more important. Other lesser ranked categories that females prefer include: Animals (11% to 9%), Religion(7% to 5%), Psychological (19% to 5%) and Historical Fiction (9% to 6%).

National/regional distinctions occur as well. Among the top five books are Adventure, Mystery, Nonfiction and Sports with one difference: the Ct. students choose Romance while the Al. students choose Science Fiction. More important to Al. students (both sexes) than to Ct. students include the lesser ranked categories: Animal (13% to 6%), Religious (11% to 4%), and How-to-do (16% to 5%). Other categories show marginal national/regional differences.

Although most students ignored the last category on the questionnaire, "Others," it is worth noting some of the new categories brought up to exemplify the scope of student reading interests. The list includes: Scientific and Technical, Horror, Comedy, Westerns, Philosophical ie. Utopias, Music, Cars, Drugs, Escapism, Fantasy, Barbaric, Photography, History, Travel, Fiction, Variety, Children's books and English texts.

Some Ct. and Al. urban students and the Al. rural students note a preference for ethnic books of Italian, Latin, German and Scandinavian origin. However, books by or about ethnic/racial categories listed on the questionnaire (Black, Indian, Puerto Rican and Chicano) rank lowest. Nevertheless, more females than males and more Al. students than Ct. students prefer racial/ethnic books.

A good test for measuring how accurate students' responses to whether and to how much they like to read comes in answering the question "How many books that are not required in class for school do you read generally in a month?"

The responses are seen easiest by the following table.

How many books not required in class read per month

	Total	Ct.	Al.	Male	Female	Rural Ct.	Suburban Ct.	Urban Ct.	Rural Al.	Suburban Al.	Urban Al.
No answer	6	7	7	7	8	3	10	36	5	3	11
None	26	30	24	34	20	19	25	4	26	24	21
One	31	29	32	32	29	34	32	31	30	37	30
Two	16	18	15	15	17	21	12	18	16	13	16
Three	8	8	7	6	9	9	15	5	6	7	8
Four to Six	7	4	9	3	10	4	5	3	8	8	9
Seven+	6	4	6	3	7	10	1	3	9	8	5
Average # Books @Mnth	1.6	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.3	1.2	1.8	1.8	1.7

The greatest number of total respondents read one book per month with 31% votes and the average number of books of all respondents is 1.6 book per month. Sex differences emerge. Males tend to read less because the largest number of males answer "none" with the other males answering less often to answers where the number of books read per month increases. Females more than males in Ct. and Al. as a whole read more. Less females choose the "none" category; they prefer to read more than one book per month with the female percentage consistently higher than the males in the four to seven books per month categories. In short, females read 1.9 books per month while males read 1.7 books per month.

In looking at national/regional differences, a parallel situation to the sex distinction occurs: as females read more than males, so do Al. students read more than Ct. students (with 1.7 Al. to 1.4 Ct. books per month read). Individual schools lead in particular categories with certain local patterns emerging

in regard to rural, suburban and urban areas. Ct. provides the most dramatic differences with the rural Ct. students reading most (1.9 books per month) and the urban Ct. students reading least (1.2 books per month). The urban Ct. students answer the question least; more rural Al. students do not read any books; the suburban Al. students read one book per month most. Both Ct. and Al. rural students read more than one book per month most,(when percentages for the "two" to "seven+" books are added); the rural Ct. students hold a slight edge with 44% to 39% rural Ct. students.

An important factor in governing what students read is the physical characteristics of the reading material. Thus, I asked "Do you prefer to read a hardbound or a paperback book?" and "Why?". Fifty-seven of all students favor paperbacks; 6% favor hardbacks; 28% favor either paperback or hardback; 3% prefer neither; and 6% did not answer the question.

Hardbound or Paperback Book

	Total	Ct.	Al.	Male	Female	Rural Ct.	Suburban Ct.	Urban Ct.	Rural Al.	Suburban Al.	Urban Al.
Hardbound	6	7	7	6	6	6	12	5	5	7	5
Paperback	57	64	51	62	52	52	60	69	54	49	52
Either	28	25	30	22	33	35	25	19	36	28	27
No Answer	6	3	11	7	8	7	3	5	3	13	12
Neither	3	1	1	3	1	0	0	2	2	3	4

Males favor paperbacks slightly more than females (62% to 52%) and Ct. students prefer paperbacks slightly more than Al. students (64% to 51%).

Popular reasons for choosing paperbacks over hardbound books include, in order of popularity: easier to carry, easier to handle, cheaper, shorter, smaller, easier to read, more current material, able to carry in a purse and/or pocket, better selection, less academic feeling and personal choice. The only major regional and sex differences are: 26% Ct. over 17% Al. students favor "easier to carry" and 15% males to 2% females favor "cheaper."

Popular reasons for choosing hardbound books over paperbacks include, in order of popularity: longer life span, easier to handle, larger print, better stories, easier to keep and better quality. No significant regional or sex differences appear.

Nine of the surveyed teachers use paperback books in class assignments. Six teachers would rather teach a paperback book because of student interest or financial reasons. Two teachers (a rural Al. and an urban Ct.) prefer neither and rather stress the quality and value of the work itself. Two teachers (rural and suburban Al.) prefer hardbound books because of their durability (although one teacher admits that the school budget necessitates that he prefer paperbacks). One teacher from the urban Al. school did not answer. Thus, it seems that most of the teachers use what the students want most, the paperback book.

A big part of personal reading often centers about hobbies or personal interests and in part reflects the type and amount of outside reading that a person does. Thus, I asked students what their hobbies or interests are and whether they read any books on them.

The most common hobbies in order of popularity include: Sports (which includes golf, tennis, cycling, soccer, cayaking, sailing, canoeing, swimming, snorkeling, trampoline, gymnastics,

jogging, weightlifting, bowling, archery, rollerskating, racketball, cricket, coaching, football, basketball and horsebackriding) with 17%; Arts and Crafts (including drafting, woodworking, carpentry, metal, etc.) 5%; Cars and Motorcycles 6%; Plants and Animals 5%; Academic Subjects (science, history, religion, archaeology, etc) 4%; Winter Sports (skiing, skating, hockey, snowmobiling) 4%; Outdoor Interests (fishing, hiking, hunting, rifling, camping) 4%; Music (voice, dance, musical instruments) 3%; Sewing and Handiwork 1%; Occult, Meditation, Yoga 1%; and Sex, Drinking, Partying 1%.

Other interests include electronics and radio, modelbuilding, coin, stamp and other collecting, poetry and writing, photography, eating, reading, cards and pool, drama, cheerleading, cooking, chess, travel, working, business, fashions, karate, people, gardening and motorcross. Some striking hobbies include skeet, ecosystems, controlling the mind, the real estate market, training horses for buggy-pulling, reading World War II books, and volunteering for social work with the handicapped and with a Black History program for children.

Some minor regional distinctions occur. More Al[illegible]than Ct. students prefer winter sports (6% to 0.3%), cars and motorcycles (7% to 5%), people (2% to 0%) and motorcross (1% to 0%).

The most popular hobbies and interests parallel the most widely-read hobby/interest affiliated books. Sports leads with 18% of the total votes. Other books following are: Cars 6%; Arts and Crafts 5%; Music 4%; Outdoor Activities 4%; Academic subjects 4%; Plants and Animals 4%; Winter Sports 3%; People 2%; Sex, Drinking and Partying 1.5%; Occult, Meditation and Yoga 1.5%; Poetry and Writing 1%; Karate 1%; and Motorcross 1%.

It is interesting to note that the students listed 173 specific titles on their personal hobbies and interests as well as many more general book types.

Beside the physical qualities and hobby/interest affiliation of a book are other determinants of student reading. Thus, I asked "Where do you get most of your ideas for the books you read?". The most popular source is "Friends" with 56% of the total students. The "Friends" category also shows some local differences where rural students value friends most and urban students value friends least in choosing a book (62% Ct. to 63% Al. rural, 53% Ct. to 54% Al. suburban, and 45% Ct. to 46% Al. urban). "Friends" is the leading choice in every category (regional, local and sex).

Librarians are the next most popular source of books with 52% of the total vote. It also is in the top five choices for national/regional preference; Al. students favor it more than Ct. students (61% to 42%). The next most popular sources in both locations are: Book racks in other stores (drugstores, food stores, department stores, etc.) 31%; Bookstores 26%; Teachers 21%; Bestseller lists 17%; Newspaper/Magazine reviews 18%; Parents 14%; Personal choice 4%; Bookcovers 1%; Family 1%; Browsing through the library 0.8%; and Movies 0.6%.

Females consistently bring more responses to all categories with one exception where in the "Other" category, males prefer "Personal choice" more than females. Two prominent local distinctions occur::19% urban Ct. students prefer Bookcovers (whereas other schools responded here from 3% to 0%) and 2% urban Ct. students prefer Bookstores while 53% suburban Ct. students prefer Bookstores.

In order to determine the affect and the extent to which books are influencial enough to lead to other visual media, I asked "What movies have you seen after you have read the same book?" Sixty-six percent of these students had done this and they listed 176 movies. The 25 most popular movies seen after they had read the same book include:

JAWS	25%	GONE WITH THE WIND	2%
THE EXORCIST	9%	PAPILLON	2%
THE GODFATHER	7%	SUMMER OF '42	1.4%
SERPICO	4%	ROMEO AND JULIET	1.4%
LOVE STORY	4%	THE HAPPY HOOKER	1%
THE GREAT GATSBY	3%	THE TOWERING INFERNO	1%
ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO"S NEST	4%	TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD	1%
		WEST SIDE STORY	1%
ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH	2.6%	DAY OF THE JACKAL	1%
HELTER SKELTER	2.6%	SUNSHINE	1%
GO ASK ALICE	2.3%	2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY	1%
AIRPORT	2%	A SEPARATE PEACE	1%
BLESS THE BEASTS AND THE CHILDREN	2%	M.A.S.H.	1%

Many of these titles appear on the previously examined Best and Worst Book Lists.

Some national/regional differences occur. The Exorcist, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Bless the Beasts and the Children, Helter Skelter and Papillon were more popular in Al. than in Ct. while Jaws, The Great Gatsby, Serpico, and The Godfather were popular in Ct.

Some sex preferences also occur. More males than females read and saw Jaws and The Godfather while more females than males read and saw The Exorcist, Serpico, Love Story, Gone With the Wind, Go Ask Alice, Once is Not Enough and Sunshine.

Other movies beyond the top twenty-five movies range from Born Free to Ben Hur, Cinderella to Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang, Hotel to Hamlet, The French Connection to Fiddler on the Roof, and Mandingo to Macbeth.

Because students' reading is influenced greatly by movies, I asked the teachers of the polled students if they ever refer in class to movies seen by the students outside of class. Seven of the ten surveyed teachers make reference not only to current movies but also to the relationship between a particular book and the movie based upon it. Two teachers, however, one from the suburban Ct. and one from the rural Al. schools, do not refer to movies and one urban Ct. teacher refers to movies "occasionally." All ten teachers use some form of audiovisual media to compliment their lessons, including films, filmstrips, records, videotapes and sound cassettes.

These students seem to see a movie often because they have read the book of the same title. Similarly, the students' reading is influenced greatly by popular films. Beyond determining which books led the high schoool students to see the same movie, I asked "What books have you read after you have seen the same movie?" in order to detemine what movies were influencial sources for book choices.

Of the 33% who responded to this item, students listed 137 books. The most popular books include:

JAWS	10%	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN	1%
THE EXORCIST	2%	AMERICAN GRAFFITI	Less than 1%
THE GREAT GATSBY	2%	GO ASK ALICE	"
LOVE STORY	2%	M.A.S.H.	"
AIRPORT	1%	ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH	"
ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST	1%	SERPICO	"
THE GODFATHER	1%	THE SOUND OF MUSIC	"
THE STING	1%	SUNSHINE	"
		2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY	"

Forty-eight percent of the book titles are also listed on the previous movie title list. Other books beyond the top seventeen books range from Catch 22 to Camelot, The Happy Hooker to Hamlet, Serpico to Siddhartha, Oliver Twist to The Other, and Bambi to The Born Losers.

Other reading materials beside books comprise student reading and merit some examination as to how important they are to students. I asked students if they ever read comic books now and if so, which ones. More than half or 57% of the total respondents read comic books. More Al. students tend to read comic books than do Ct. students (65% to 47%). Little significant sex differences occur (56% males to 51% females read comic books). The greatest percentages of comic book readers come from the rural and the Al. schools.(with 51%, 67%, 64%, and 65% respectively) while more than half of suburban and urban Ct. students do not read comic books (59% and 54% respectively).

The most popular comic books include: Archie 21%, Superman 6%, Mad 3%, Batman 2%, Superheroes, Spiderman, Conan and Dennis the Menace 1%. Some comic book-types received special notice as well: Action-Adventure 3%, Romance 3%, and Mystery-Horror 2.7%.

Other titles showing the scope of comic books read by these high school students range from tha Action types such as Captain Fantastic, Captain Marvel, Flash Gordon, Star Trek and the Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers to Horror types such as Twilight Zone, Frankenstein and Dracula to Prehistoric Monster types such as Thor, Claw and Beowulf to Humorous types such as Bugs Bunny, Donald Duck, Dagwood, Beetle Bailey, The Flintstones, Betty and Veronica and Sabrina to Educational types such as Ripley's Believe It Or Not to Sex types such as The National Lampoon.

Only significant regional and sex differences occur with the Archie comic books where 27% Al. to 14% Ct. and 24% females to 18% males prefer Archie. Males prefer the Action-Adventure, Horror-Mystery, and Sex-affiliated comic books while females prefer the Romance comic books.

Six of the ten surveyed teachers do not use comics or comic books in their classes but two of these teachers admitted to using them in class through allusion or for seeking themes. Three teachers use comics. In an urban Ct. school film study class, they are used to exemplify film skills such as framing, motion, color, arrangement, angle and distance. In the rural Al. school, two teachers note that they are used to teach satire and other related themes.

The newspaper is an even more popular reading material than comic books to the polled high school students. Ninety percent of the total respondents read newspapers while 8% do not and 2% did not answer at all. The Al. students read more than the Ct. students (94% to 77%) but 20% of the Ct. students did not answer. The largest number of students who read the newspaper were from the suburban Ct. schools while the smallest number were from the rural and urban Ct. schools.

Students in all categories (total, regional, local and sex) read "local" newspapers most with two exceptions in the rural and suburban Al. schools where "local area" newspapers are read more than "local" newspapers. The Ct. students read the "local" newspaper more than the Al. students also (95% to 56%). "Local area," "distant," and "state or provincial" newspapers follow in order of popularity.

When asked how often they read the newspaper, students responded: 61% daily, 24% weekly, 11% occasionally, 2% never and 2% did not answer. More Ct. than Al. students read daily newspapers (70% to 52%) and more males than females read daily newspapers (65% to 57%). No significant local differences occur.

Students were asked then which sections of the newspaper they prefer most. Here are their responses in order of popularity:

Front Page	68%	Advertisements	21%	Headlines	0.6%
Comics	56%	Social Page	19%	All	0.3%
Local News	47%	Editorial Page	17%	Weather	0.3%
Amusements	46%	Financial Page	7%	Births	0.3%
Sports Page	44%	Horoscope	7%	Travel	0.3%
General News	35%	Others:		Daily Chuckle	0.1%
Want Ads	34%	Obituary	1%	Taken to Hospital	0.1%
Dear Abby	34%	Arrests/Traffic Violators	0.7%	Critics	0.1%
World News	26%			Fashion	0.1%
				Biological Report	0.1%

Regional differences occur. Al. students prefer the Front Page more than Ct. students (70% to 66%) while more Ct. students prefer the Sports Page (50% to 38%), Comics (59% to 54%) and Local News (56% to 39%).

Eight of the ten surveyed teachers use newspapers in the classroom (only a rural Ct. and a suburban Ct. teachers do not). In the urban Ct. school, a Composition Analysis class does the word puzzle in the Hartford Courant weekly and another Media class uses it to study communication. In the rural Al. school classified ads and editorials are used to teach the business letter and clippings emphasize points in class. In the suburban Al. school, newspapers are used in specific units on the media. In the urban Al. school, newspapers are used upon occasion in reference to relevant, interesting articles.

Magazines provide another type of reading material for the high school students. When asked "What magazines do you read regularly?" about 75% of the total respondents read magazines. More males than females and more Ct. than Al. students tend to read magazines as well. Students listed 183 magazines. The 26 most popular magazines are:

TIME	17%	HOT ROD	2%
SEVENTEEN	10%	MACLEANS	2%
SPORTS ILLUSTRATED	9%	SPORT(S)	2%
NEWSWEEK	8%	PEOPLE	2%
READER'S DIGEST	7%	COSMOPOLITAN	2%
CHATELAINE/MISS CHATELAINE	7%	REDBOOK	2%
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	4%	WOMAN'S DAY	2%
PLAYBOY	4%	FAMILY CIRCLE	2%
GLAMOUR	3%	SKI	1%
SKIING	3%	OUTDOOR LIFE	1%
NATIONAL LAMPOON	3%	EDMONTON REPORT	1%
PENTHOUSE	3%	'TEEN	1%
CANADIAN MAGAZINE	3%	HIGH TIMES	1%

Some national/regional differences occur. The top six magazines in Al. in order of popularity are: Time 17%, Sports Illustrated 14%, Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine 13%, Reader's Digest 8%, Playboy 6%, and Canadian Magazine 6%; in Ct: Time 17%, Seventeen 17%, Sports Illustrated 15%, Newsweek 14%, Reader's Digest 5% and Glamour 5%.

Sole Ct. responses are Yankee and Tennis. Sole Al. responses are Consumer Reports, Guns and Ammunition, Canadian Magazine, Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine, Macleans, and Edmonton Report. Again as with Canadian-published books, no American students read Canadian magazines although Canadian students read American magazines.

Sex preferences also occur. The top magazines in order of popularity are for males: Time 20%, Sports Illustrated 14%, Newsweek 9%, Playboy 8%, and Penthouse 7%; for females: Seventeen 19%, Time 14%, Reader's Digest 8%, Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine 8%, and Newsweek 7%.

Sole male responses are: Psychology Today, People, Yankee, Outdoor Life, Guns and Ammunition, U.S. News and World Report, Hustler, Gentleman's Quarterly and numerous car magazines such as Car and Track, Motorcyclist and Mechanics Illustrated. Sole female responses are for woman's magazines such as Woman's Day,

Family Circle, Redbook, Cosmopolitan, Good Housekeeping, Seventeen, Mademoiselle, Vogue, McCall's, and Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine.

In order to determine how important magazines are to the students, I asked "Do you personally subscribe to any magazines? (not your parent(s)' subscriptions)" and "If so, which one(s)?". Thirty-seven percent of all the students subscribe and more Ct. students subscribe with 43% to 30% Al. subscribers. Similarly, more males subscribe with 42% to 33% female subscribers. Only the Ct. suburban school has a majority of students (75%) who subscribe to their own magazines.

Students list 106 magazines and the top 22 subscribed magazines in order of popularity include:

SEVENTEEN	3%	HOCKEY NEWS/DIGEST/ILLUSTRATED	0.9%
SPORTS ILLUSTRATED	3%	POPULAR SCIENCE	0.7%
CHATELAINE/MISS CHATELAINE	3%	GOLF/GOLF WORLD/GOLF DIGEST	0.7%
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	2%	MOTOR TREND	0.7%
TENNIS	2%	HOT ROD	0.7%
TIME	2%	CAR AND DRIVER	0.6%
OUTDOOR LIFE	1%	CAR CRAFT	0.6%
SKI	1%	POPULAR MECHANICS	0.6%
GLAMOUR	1%	SPORT(S)	0.6%
READER'S DIGEST	1%	NEWSWEEK	0.6%
PLAYBOY	1%	CYCLE/CYCLE WORLD/BICYCLING	0.6%

Regional preferences occur. Ct. students prefer Sports Illustrated and Seventeen, while Al. students prefer Time (the Canadian version), Skiing, Ski and Hockey News/Digest/Illustrated. Sole Ct. responses include Tennis and Science Digest while sole Al. responses include Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine.

Males prefer Sports Illustrated. Sole male responses include Hot Rod, Car and Driver; Skiing; Popular Photography; Popular Electronics, Radio Electronics and Amateur Radio; Cycle, Cycle World, and Bicycling; and Hockey News/ Digest/Illustrated. Sole female responses include Chatelaine/Miss Chatèlaine, Glamour, Seventeen, 'Teen, and Cosmopolitan.

The most popular types of subscribed magazines emerge: Sports 12%, Female-Affiliated 11%, Mechanics 4%, Sex 3%, and Outdoors 3%. No significant national differences occur. Males prefer the Sports, Mechanics, Outdoors and Sex magazines while females prefer the Teen and Woman's magazines. It seems that winter sports magazines are more important to the Al. students and that Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine is the top Al. female magazine whereas Seventeen is the top Ct. female magazine.

Se Seven of the ten surveyed teachers use magazines in their lessons. The rural Ct. school offers a specific course on the magazine and communications media. The other teachers refer to magazines in class to illustrate points, to compliment lessons, to teach composition, to study advertising and the media, to teach a unit on the library, and to learn research skills.

Students' response toward the evaluation of an assigned book reflects the degree of student motivation and acceptance of the English class, literature and reading itself. Thus, I asked students, "How are you evaluated for reading a book in your English class?" and "How do/would you like to be evaluated?" Ninety-three percent of all students answered the first question while only 35% answered the second question. It seems that the students know how they are evaluated but not how they would like to be evaluated. A comparative list of actual and desirable forms of evaluation in order of prevalence includes:

How Evaluated		How evaluated/like to be evaluated
Test/Exam	55%	14%
Papers/Essays	39%	15%
Book Report	30%	15%
Quizzes	29%	8%
Oral Report	18%	13%
Class Discussion	2%	8%
Not evaluated	0.7%	5%
Reading Analysis	0.1%	0.6%

While students are evaluated most by tests/exams, they prefer papers/essays, book reports and oral reports about as well. They prefer quizzes least. Other forms of evaluation used include: questions, projects, reading, reviews, oral reading and teacher's opinion. Other forms of evaluation that students desire include: personal views, reviews, group work, projects, personal effort and with such qualities as honesty and fairness.

The Ct. students list class discussion more often than the Al. students (11% to 5%) while the Al. students list oral reports more (16% to 10%). The Ct. students prefer quizzes (33% to 26%) more, while the Al. students prefer oral reports (22% to 14%), papers/essays (43% to 34%) and tests/exams (58% to 51%) more. The only significant sex preference occurs in the females for class discussion (11% females to 4% males). Local preferences are marginal.

I also asked teachers how they evaluate the student's understanding of a book. Their responses are as follows:

Papers/Essays	9 out of 10 teachers
Tests/Exams	8 out of 10 teachers
Oral reports	7 out of 10 teachers
Quizzes	6 out of 10 teachers
Book Reports	6 out of 10 teachers

Miscellaneous: themes, projects, taped discussions and committee panel presentations.

Another possible source of student reading is the library and, specifically, the school library. In order to determine the extent to which students use it and find it adequate, I asked "Do you think your school library has a good selection of books?" and "If not, where does it need improvement?" Only 51% of the total respondents find their school library adequate, 39% do not, and 10% did not answer. The Al. students approve of it more than Ct. (58% to 43%) and males approve of it more than females (54% to 49%).

More than half of the students approve of the library in all schools except in the rural and urban Ct. schools. Improvements for the school library in order of popularity include:

Better Selection	11%	Different Librarian	2%
More Subject Areas*	8%	More Paperbacks	2%
More Bestsellers	7%	Size/Atmosphere/Facilities	1%
Everywhere	6%	Reference Materials	1%
General Amusement/ Information	3%	Newspapers/Magazines	0.6%
		End Stealing	0.4%
		More Freedom to enter library	0.3%

*Includes sports, occult, nonfiction, fiction, mechanics, psychiatry, mystery, underground materials, ecology, Christian, biography, horror and science fiction)

The Ct. students and the females tend to answer each category with more responses than the Al. students and the males do, indicating that along with their dissatisfaction with the school library, the Ct. students and the females feel a greater need for improvement there.

Students then compared their town and school libraries in the question "Which has a better selection: Town/City Library or School Library?". Seventy-seven percent of the total responses favor their town libraries, 9% favor their school libraries and 14% did not answer. The Ct. students and the males favor their town libraries more (83% Ct. to 72% Al. students and 80% males to 74% females). The urban Ct. students feel most strongly (97%) that their city library has a better selection, with the suburban Al., suburban Ct.,urban Al. students following. Although they prefer their town libraries as well, both Ct. and Al.rural students are most satisfied with their school libraries than the other students are.

The students show some definite opinions about the selection and the need for improvement in the libraries that they use. It was appropriate then to ask them "How often do you use these

libraries?" in order to determine how valid their previous comments are. More than three-fourths or 77% of the total students do not use the school library often (answering with comments such as "rarely," "monthly," "sometimes" "only when necessary," and "never."). No significant national/regional, local or sex differences are noticeable.

I also asked teachers about the library: "Are you satisfied with the material, facilities in your school library?"If not, where does it need improvement?" Seven of the ten teachers surveyed are satisfied with their school libraries. One suburban Ct. teacher is satisfied but would like to see a larger library budget; an urban Ct. teacher wants more conservative, less left-wing materials as well as critical books on English; and a rural Al. teacher desires more critical reviews and more "software" to supplement basic books. The three dissatisfied teachers are from the urban Ct., the rural Al. and the urban Al. schools.

All of the teachers encourage students to use the school library but vary in how they promote library study. Assigning term papers, research projects and outside reading are the most popular ways. The rural and suburban Al. teachers mentioned specific teaching of library skills. And two teachers from both the Ct. and Al. schools note that library work depends upon the the particular students or class and their attitude.

None of the four librarians surveyed are dissatisfied with their school libraries. Librarians find it "adequate" in the rural Ct. school, "good" in the suburban and urban Ct. schools, and "excellent" in the rural Al. school. (Librarians from the other two school libraries were not available for comment).

All librarians state that their school library is used constantly by the students and is usually overcrowded. The school library is used primarily as a study area, resource center and relaxing, browsing area while the social atmosphere is discouraged on the whole.

Librarians choose new books through teacher/student requests, reading reviews (ie. New York Times Sunday edition and the Christian Science Monitor), professional publications and publisher catalogs, browsing at book house and publishing house previews, and selected booklists such as the American Library Association Booklist.

All the school librarians that were polled feel that they have a fair amount of paperbacks (with the exception of the suburban Ct. library which has a separate Adolescent Literature Room maintained by the Reading dept). Yet in no school library is there a large number of paperbacks. While the two rural school librarians affirm that most of their paperback books are for teenagers, the suburban and urban Ct. school librarians admit that they do not cater substantially to adolescent literature because their students have access to paperbacks in other places anyway.

Book clubs are another source of motivating high school students to read as well as an indication of whether students read and, if so, a reflection of what they like to read. Thus, I asked "Which book clubs do you belong to?". Nearly three-fourths or 72% of the total students do not belong to any book club and 24% did not respond to the question. However, 4% of the students including males and females of both countries list fifteen book clubs which are:

BOOK OF THE MONTH	0.4%	MILITARY	0.1%
DOUBLEDAY	0.4%	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	0.1%
SCHOLASTIC	0.3%	READER'S DIGEST	0.1%
ARROW	0.1%	TALKING BOOK LIBRARY	0.1%
BANTAM	0.1%	TIME/LIFE	0.1%
HERITAGE	0.1%	TIME AND HOBBIES CLUB	0.1%
LITERARY GUILD	0.1%	YOUTH ART CLUB	0.1%
MOVIE	0.1%		

I then went on to ask "Which book clubs does your school/ English class offer?" in order to determine whether the school/ English class influences a student's decision to join a book club. Only three Al. students (one from each school) mention the Bantam book club. The remaining 8% of the total students who do list school book clubs are Ct. students of both sexes in all three schools with the urban school leading with 16%, followed by the rural school of 15% and the suburban school of 7%. The twelve school-sponsored book clubs/classroom-subscribed magazines include:

SCHOLASTIC	4%	BOOK OF THE MONTH	0.1%
SENIOR PAPERBACK	0.7%	CAMPUS BOOKS	0.1%
LITERARY CAVALCADE	0.6%	KEY CLUB	0.1%
ARROW	0.6%	NUTMEG	0.1%
SCOPE	0.3%	READ	0.1%
BANTAM	0.1%	TAB	0.1%

When asked whether their schools support book fairs and book sales, another way in which to motivate student reading, only 21% students answered that their schools did. Of the 21% who responded affirmatively, more are from Ct. and are males (32% Ct. to 12% Al. and 26% males to 16% females). Most of the responses from each country come from the suburban schools, with the rural schools having the least number. Particularly outstanding is the suburban Ct. school with 81% affirming school-sponsored book fairs and sales.

Eight of the ten surveyed teachers admitted that their school does not sponsor any book fairs or sales and an urban Al. teacher did not respond. Only the suburban Ct. school sponsors book fairs and sales as well as a large amount of book clubs such as the

Scholastic book club which the Reading teacher handles. The rural Ct. school also sponsors this book club through the school librarian. One urban Ct. teacher sponsors the Senior Paperback book club.

Having established some of the students' reading interests and habits and the school's hand in motivating students' reading, I zeroed in on the primary source and motivation of student reading: the English class. First, I asked "Do you like your English class?" and "Why or why not?".

Nearly three-fourths or 73% of the total students like their English class (17% do not likeit and 10% did not answer). More Ct. students than Al. students prefer their English class (82% Ct. to 66% Al.) and more females than males prefer it (76% females to 69% males). The urban Ct. and the rural Ct. schools responded most favorably of all responses (86% and 82%, respectively), and the rural Al. follows (79%).

Students present numerous reasons why they like or dislike their English classes. Those reasons why students like their English class include:

Interesting	14%	Class discussion	3%
Good Teacher	9%	Challenging, sense of freedom and responsibility	2%
Good books, materials and approach to lessons	7%	Variety of work/electives	2%
Fun	4%	Nice atmosphere/classmates	2%
Learn alot	4%	Like to read	1%
Reasonable work load	3%	Personal growth	1%
		Learn basics: grammar, writing skills	1%
		Creative Writing	1%

Other less prominent reasons (less than 1%) are: Provides good introduction to new books, Personal choice in materials and assignments, Independent work, Good grading system and Small class size.

Next to the rather vague reason "Interesting" stands the teacher as the primary reason why students like their English class. As one Ct. student put it:"I like English because the

teacher is a hell of a good one!". Students tend to be very varied and detailed in listing what books, materials and methods they like as well as what they have learned and appreciated in their English class, from learning the Bible more deeply to winning candy canes!

However, the 17% of the students who do not like their English class have some strong, lengthy and sometimes vague reasons as well. In order of prominence, the reasons include:

Boring	5%	Hate English and school	2%
Teacher	3%	Irrelevant	1%
Too much work	2%		

Other less prominent reasons (less than 1%) are: Inadequate methods of teaching; Too informal; Drag, loony, dumb, other such adjectives; Read into books too much; Dislike material; Hate to read; Hate restrictions, compulsoriness, deadlines; Unfair grading.

Again, the teacher, materials, methods of teaching and personal bias about interests, English and school are the crucial factors in determining whether or not students like their English class. Some never cease to amaze a researcher with reasons for disliking English classes, such as because the girls in class are ugly or because <u>not enough</u> (!) classics are taught! It seems no one is ever completely happy. Nevertheless, it is satisfying to see that most of the students like and learn much in their English classes.

One reason stated both for and against the English class is the required books and materials assigned to students. Because this factor is usually the whole foundation of the English class, I further asked "Do you like the books that you are required to read in your English class?" and "Why or why not?". Less distinctive majority responses occur with only 46% voting "Yes" and 8% voting "Sometimes". More females than males tend to like the

required books (48% females to 43% males "Yes"; 25% to 40% "No"; 10% to 7% "Sometimes"). The rural and suburban Al. schools favor required books most, with the suburban Ct. school following.

Reasons in order of prominence for why students like the required books include:

Interesting, good	9%	Introduction to new material that one might not find otherwise	2%
Thematic study ie. Myth, American Dream, Bible	3%		
Good selection	3%	Enjoyment	1%
Not required, allowed personal choice	2%	Like to read	1%

Other less prominent reasons (less than 1%) are: Types of materials ie. Shakespeare, classics, contemporary; Discussion of book; Easy to read; Relevant; Teacher and treatment of book; Informative; Good for us.

While these reasons seem plausible and in order, one is puzzling: 0.4% students from Ct. and Al. schools note that they like the required books because they do not have to read them!

Student reasons in order of prominence against required books parallel the reasons against English classes and include:

Boring, uninteresting	12%	Dislike required reading	2%
Dislike topics chosen/ rather have topics ranging from Old English and Shakespeare to Sports and Picture books	4%	Difficult material	2%
		Hate to read	2%
		Dumb, stupid, drag, stinks and other such adjectives	1%
		Irrelevant, outdated	1%
		Analyze too much	1%

Lengthy and varied answers replied to the question "What suggestions would you offer to make your English class better?". Teachers are a favorite topic with some contented students wanting "more teachers like ..." to others wishing to get rid of "boring," "over the hill" teachers "who have a 'terrible' voice and read all day," to improve student-teacher relationships and to prepare students better for the next grade level.

Books and materials are the most widely discussed topics. Most students desire more contemporary, relevant materials and more interesting, informative and exciting literature. A number

of students are quite demanding about their work load, wanting more reading, more rigid curricula, more Shakespeare, more plays, more poetry, and more films. A large number of students express a need for more open topics chosen by the students based upon one's own interests ranging from fiction, romance and sex to action and car books (even Chilton's Manual!) And some students want "cleaner" material: "I think books of sex, violence and witchcraft should be banned." One rural Al. student wants more Canadian content in the curriculum as well: "There are alot of good Canadian authors. It's a shame we are exposed to so little of them in school." Students also recognize the need for more contemporary materials in their school libraries: "There would be far better use of the library if kids had some say in what's there."

Many students feel they need more practice in writing, grammar and vocabulary skills. Comments ask for more word sheets, spelling and vocabulary drills, creative writing, grammar and use of style. One urban Al. student notes "I need help so I won't keep repeating myself" and an urban Ct. student wants to know "how to put across your feelings fluently on paper." However, one area of writing, evaluating films, brings a groan: some students prefer to see the movie without having to analyze it.

Some students do not dislike English but have difficulty with it and would appreciate better materials: books at different reading levels with more pictures and taught along with audio-visual aids. One visually handicapped student from the urban Al. school requires books of large type and unfortunately can be exposed only to a more limited number of materials than the other students. As another student notes "It's hard to get into (English)

when you're a slow learner." And as one suburban Ct. student notes:

> Open discussion benefits me the most in English class. Books turn alot of kids off because they lack basic reading skills and they don't understand the book (ie. poor vocabulary). My vocabulary is pretty exstensive* so I can read and enjoy more.
>
> *Note the spelling.

Yet other students want a freer, more challenging atmosphere, wanting more "spares" (free periods), less stress upon attendence and requirements, more opportunity to read during the school day, more independent reading and assignments, a wider selection of books, booklists to compliment assigned books and advanced assignment lists. However, students do not want a lax, permissive environment either. Particularly the urban Al. students want a "stricter, less noisy" classroom where the teacher would "dismiss kids who fall asleep in class" and "get rid of the loudmouths who disrupt the class".

The methods of studying a book are discussed as well. Students want more expanded, effective English courses such as Drama, Film Study (in the urban Ct. school), more comparative study of early and contemporary literature and more relating of English to other subjects. A number of students would rather complete one unit or assignment before starting another, cover materials in less depth and faster but in more stimulating ways. Students want more films, music, field trips and outdoor activities in conjunction with the books they read. And, most of all, the common cry is for fresh, contemporary and relevant material: "It should fit into our own world-- it's too BORING!!".

Means of evaluating students is another favorite topic among the high school students. More students prefer an open, informal atmosphere with more class discussion and participation,

self-expression, oral reports, group work and projects; they realize the necessity of smaller class sizes as well. Students prefer more reports and quizzes to less papers and tests. Tests bring many comments: desire for more review time, more relevant tests, more time to write tests, less cramming and, of course, less tests. Some students were fairly vague about better alternatives (ie. "less" homework and a "better" grading system) but others were very explicit about evaluation: one student outlines three book reports, a few journals and essays a year in addition to regular assignments.

Asking for suggestions always brings a few humorous comments. Some students want to revise the school system: reducing English to a one year requirement, eliminating English from the curriculum, ridding of "formalities," starting school at 10:00 a.m., having "a party or two," and wishing they "could talk more and eat and tell you (the teacher) what we want to do." Some would improve the atmosphere: "painting the walls a different color," "turning the heat off," and opening up a few windows ("The guys come in smelly after noon-hour activities and I don't like it.").

And there are those fatalistic souls who say "there's no hope," "You can't do anything to make me like English," "School stinks -- teachers don't give a damn," "No suggestions -- I'm leaving." I received one warning "Don't take the course."

Lastly, I asked "Any additional comments that are relevant to this questionnare would be appreciated." I received a number of compliments and best wishes for success in the project. Students both like and dislike writing questionnaires in general and this study's questionnaire in particular. Reading itself brings varied

comments where a good number of students enjoy reading and desire more time for it. Most of the students, however, did not answer.

I asked the teachers also to reflect upon their choice of books, type of curriculum and methods of teaching. All schools present definite guidelines outlined by the English department for a standard curriculum; teachers from the rural Ct., suburban Ct., the rural Al., and the suburban Al. school note more flexibility in their ability to teach electives according to their own/their students' interests or to choose the specific materials they use from set genres, periods and themes.

Teachers generally choose the books they teach, getting their ideas from publisher catalogs, booklists, magazine articles, available resources, teacher aids such as the English Journal, teacher reference libraries, student readiness, personal reading and experience, other teachers, the school curriculum, prescribed lists from the Department of Education, summer workshops and students.

The three Ct. schools are on the elective system; treatment of courses in all schools (ie. chronologically, thematically, topically) depends upon the specific course. The Al. teachers tend to specify units (literary genres) and thematic study as the basis of their curriculum.

The teachers are divided about the distribution of bibliographies to students in order to compliment the books that they teach. Four teachers do, three do not or do so rarely (at one time in the past they did) and three distribute them sometimes.

All ten teachers encourage outside reading (ie. on vacations) but do not force students or follow such reading with assignments. Only one urban Al. teacher offers extra-credit marks for outside reading.

Eight of the ten teachers upon occasion and depending upon the class assign free reading projects in which students may choose a book of their own interests within some guidelines. An urban Ct. teacher and a rural Al. teacher do not assign free reading projects.

All the teachers teach classics often with the exception of one suburban Al. teacher who uses them rarely. Seven of the ten teachers use television in their classes (ie. videotape, creative drama productions and making and recording student television scripts). Only the suburban Ct., an urban Ct. and an urban Al. teacher do not use television in their classes. Eight of the ten teachers also refer in class to television seen by students outside of class (only the suburban Ct. and a rural Al. teacher do not).

Summary and Conclusions

Eighty-three percent of the polled students do read at least sometimes if not very often. Fifty percent of the polled students consider themselves lukewarm readers, reading "Sometimes, depending upon the material" while 33% are avid readers, reading "Yes, definitely". Greater percentages of females than males like to read. Suburban students tend to like reading more (particularly the suburban Ct. students) while urban students seem to enjoy reading the least.

Students' favorite books are nonfiction and fiction bestsellers, adolescent literature and books based upon or made into current movies. Jaws was the number one book among the students. Males more than females tend to read book series and hobby/interests books. While classics are not prominent in the students' Best

Book List, books that inspired movies are, where 74% of the top best books are movie titles. Canadian students read American, British and Canadian authors but American students note only American and British authors. The clearest, most evident and certainly most accurate deduction concerning these students' favorite books is that high school students do read and very widely (492 titles of the best books alone appear), that no one book is the favorite of most, and that this uniqueness and variety shows more beautifully how rich and how well used the current reading market is to high school students.

If teachers wish to plan an English curriculum around students' reading interests and habits in order to have a more enthusiastic response to their English assignments, it is not enough for teachers to be well-read in what students ought to read; they must keep abreast of what students like to read. Teachers should keep in mind that the electronic media (television and movies) have a big influence upon students' reading interests, that students' reading interests are extremely varied and that student surveys/questionnaires provide one step toward determining where the interests lie and how they can be categorized.

Becoming acquainted with the most popular book categories also offers teachers a framework from which to build independent reading assignments, a freedom, responsibility and type of assignment that many of these students desire.

Many of the titles that appear on the Best Book List appear on the Worst Book List and nearly all the books on the Best Book List are mentioned as the worst books by other students. Fewer books and fewer votes per title appear on the Worst Book List, indicating that these students have fewer "worst" than "best" books.

Shakespeare, whether noted by name or by his works, is the top "worst" book that is noted by both sexes in four of the six polled schools. Many of the "worst" books are limited to responses from one school indicating that some students are not satisfied with books that they probably read in their English classes.

The most popular book categories in order of importance are: Adventure, Mystery, Sports, Nonfiction, Science Fiction, Romance and Youth/Teenagers. Males prefer Sports and Science Fiction books while females prefer Romance and Youth/Teenagers books. Among the top five categories one regional difference occurs: more Ct. students prefer Romance while Al. students choose more Science Fiction. Females more than males and the Al. students more than the Ct. students prefer racial/ethnic books.

The greatest number of students in Ct. and Al. read one book per month; females read more than males and the Al. students read more than the Ct. students.

More than half of the students (57%) prefer a paperback to a hardbound book. Males and Ct. students are more opinionated than females and Al. students in their choice of the physical characteristics of their reading material preferring paperbacks more and hardbounds less. Nine of the ten polled teachers of these students use paperback books in their classes, although some prefer the hardbound book. In this area, the majority of both teachers and students are happy and while the librarians do not relish a major collection of solely paperback books, the school libraries do not seem to have a substantial part of their collection in paperback form.

Nearly all the students list at least one hobby or personal interest and have read books on them. Topics include sports,

mechanics, music, art, drama, arts and crafts, sewing, photography, games, collections, poetry, academics, plants and animals, outdoors, drugs, meditation, occult, religion, sex and other miscellaneous topics. Many of these areas could be represented in books acceptable in English curricula and again, if used, would strongly answer to students' interests and needs.

Friends, librarians, store bookracks, bookstores, and teachers are the five most important sources of ideas for book reading among the high school students. Both teachers and, to a greater extent, librarians should realize the impact that they have upon what students read.

Students see movies after they have read the same book; they list 176 movies. Many of the 25 most popular titles also appear on the Best and the Worst Book Lists with again Jaws as the first choice in both categories (movies seen after the book and books read after the movie). Students also read books to a lesser extent after they have seen the same movie leading one to assume that fewer movies inspire book reading than books that promote movie-viewing. Seven of the ten polled teachers make reference in class not only to current movies but also to the relationship between a particular book and the movie based upon it. All ten teachers use some form of audiovisual media to compliment their lessons. Thus, these teachers realize the impact of the electronic media on their students and reflect this knowledge in their English classes.

More than half of the total number of students read comic books. More Albertan students than Ct. students read them. Males prefer the action-adventure, horror-mystery and sex-affiliated comic books while females prefer the romance comic books. Only

in the suburban and urban Ct. schools do more than half of the students not read comic books. The most popular comic book is Archie. Five of the ten surveyed teachers admit to using the comic book in class to teach satire and other related themes, in lesson planning for ideas or in allusion to class discussion of required subject matter.

Ninety percent of all the students read the newspaper. Students tend to read "local" newspapers most with "local area," "distant," and "state or provincial" newspapers following in order of popularity. The largest number of students (61%) read the newspaper daily with Ct. students and males reading daily newspapers more. The most popular newspaper sections are the front page, the comics, the local news, the amusements, and the sports page. Eight of the ten surveyed teachers use newspapers in the classroom. Again, these teachers realize the usefulness of this most popular reading material among the high school students.

At least 75% of the students read magazines and while they list 183 magazines, the most popular are Time, Seventeen, Sports Illustrated, Newsweek, Reader's Digest and Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine. Regional differences occur and while Albertan students read American magazines, no Connecticut students read Canadian magazines. Sex differences also occur where males prefer news, mechanical, sports and sex magazines and females prefer teen and women's magazines. While more Ct. students and males tend to subscribe, most of the students (63%) do not subscribe personally to any magazines. From the subscribers, come 106 magazines, the most popular being Seventeen, Sports Illustrated, Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine, National Geographic, Tennis, and Time. Again, more

males subscribe to sports, mechanics, outdoors and sex magazines and more females subscribe to teen and women's magazines. Seven of the ten surveyed teachers use the magazine in the classroom, again showing that they realize this popular form of the news media among high school students.

While the students respond well to how they are evaluated in reading an assigned book, they have fewer opinions concerning how they would like to be evaluated. While students are evaluated most by test/exams, they prefer papers/essays and book reports equally as well. Nearly all the teachers use papers/essays and tests/exams most to evaluate students. While there is a slight shift in order of importance, the teachers and students seem to agree basically on how students should be evaluated; only a small number of students bring new suggestions.

Slightly more than half of the total number of students (51%) find their school library adequate. Most popular student suggestions for improvement include better selection, more materials in specific subject areas, more bestsellers and improvements everywhere. The Ct. students and the females are most dissatisfied with their school library and, thus, list the most suggestions for its improvement. More than three fourths of the total respondents (77%) favor their town libraries over their school libraries. While they favor their town libraries more as well, the rural students seem most satisfied with their school libraries. And while the students have definite opinions about improvements, more than three fourths of the students (77%), do not use the library often. The students seem to know enough about the libraries' facilities and inadequacies indicating that they have used them. Perhaps with libraries more attuned to their interests, the students

would use the libraries more. Seven of the ten surveyed teachers and all four of the surveyed librarians are at least satisfied with their school libraries, although they list suggestions for their improvement. All the teachers encourage students to use the school library but vary in how they promote library study. Librarians list a number of varying strengths and weaknesses with their libraries but agree that the school library is used very much by the students. While the libraries have a limited amount of paperbacks and comic books, on the whole, they have a good number of classics, literature and other subject sections, magazines, periodicals and newspapers. Nevertheless, an imbalance occurs: the teachers and librarians are content with the school library, the students are not. It seems that if the school libraries are to be used more by the students, then some improvements based upon student suggestions would bring more student use of the libraries.

Only 4% of the total number of students belong to book clubs, the most popular being the Book of the Month Club, Doubleday Book Club and Scholastic Book Club. Eight percent of the total number of students (nearly all are from Ct.) list school-sponsored book clubs, the most popular being the Scholastic Book Club. Nearly all of the students state that their schools do not sponsor any book fairs or sales. Only the suburban Ct. school affirms school-sponsored book fairs and sales.

Nearly three fourths of the total number of students (73%) like and learn in their English class with more Ct. students and more females preferring them as well. Most popular reasons for students' liking and disliking their English class center about the teacher, the materials, the methods of teaching and personal

bias about interest, English and school.

However, less than half of the students (46%) like the required books of their English classes. More females and Al. students approve of the required books.

Students' suggestions in order to make their English class better center about better teachers, books and materials; more writing, grammar and vocabulary skills; greater personal responsibility in handling subject matter and assignments; better methods of handling material; and better means of evaluation.

Comparison with other National Studies

In order to see to what extent these Ct. and Al. students' reading interests and habits compare with other students' reading interests and habits, I now compare some of the findings of my study with results from other national studies.

Ken Donelson of Arizona State University in "Of Chocolate and Games and Pigs: Of Sharks and Rabbits and Owls Some Recommended Adolescent and Adult Novels, 1976"* polled 301 English teachers and librarians throughout the United States in order to determine what they recommend as the best adolescent and adult novels for teenagers. I compared these recommended books with what the Ct. and Al. students consider the best books that they have ever read. Five of the ninety recommended adolescent books on Donelson's list appear on the Best Book List of this study: The Outsiders, Bless the Beasts and the Children, Go Ask Alice, The Hobbit and Sunshine; while fourteen of the sixty Donelson's recommended adult novels appear on the Best Book List of this study: Jaws,

*Arizona English Bulletin, "Adolescent Literature Revisited After Four Years," Volume 18, April, 1976, pp.6-10.

To Kill a Mockingbird, One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, A Separate Peace, The Catcher in the Rye, Lord of the Flies, Flowers for Algernon, Slaughterhouse Five, 1984, The Great Gatsby, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Jonathan Livingston Seagull, The Old Man and the Sea, and Brave New World. Another twenty-four novels of Donelson's recommended adolescent and adult novels are mentioned at least once as a best or worst book by some of the Ct. and Al. students.

Thus, 23% of the teacher/librarian recommended books are definitely considered to be the "best" books by the polled students and another 30% of the teacher/librarian recommended books are only books that the students have read (they are "best" and "worst" books). This leads one to assume that these students do not agree wholly with the polled teachers and librarians as to what books are best. As Donelson notes, his "final list represents no one person's feelings,"* nor does it represent a majority feeling of these students, teachers and librarians in particular, or any in general, or "the" best books. It only shows what some people tend to agree upon in these studies to a limited extent as their favorite books.

The results of the comparison may mean something else as well. Those teachers that Donelson polled are informed educators and thus, are aware of far more recent books than most of the surveyed students presently have or ever will have access to. The problem, then, may not be in taste but in accessibility, especially since the survey shows that the majority of the students have inadequate libraries and no book clubs, sales and fairs.

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*Arizona English Bulletin, "Adolescent Literature Revisited After Four Years," Volume 18, April 1976, p.10.

Joanna V. McKenzie of California State University, Northridge, in "A Survey of Leisure Time Reading of Adolescents"* examines from a total of 11,197 adolescent responses in nine high schools and ten junior high schools in October 1974, one set of 1,480 Grade 12 students' responses. Among her "50 Most Popular Books, Grades 7-12," all fifty books are mentioned by the Ct. and Al students as the "best" books that they have ever read (25 books appear on the Best Book List of this study and 25 are mentioned at least once in the polled questionnaires as a "best" book). Similarly, nine of McKenzie's "Ten Most Popular Books, Grade 12" are also on this study's Best Book List and the tenth book is mentioned by some Ct. and Al. students on the polled questionnaires (although not enough to make the Best Book List). It seems that students agree more with students than with teachers and librarians what the best books are. It is interesting also to note that McKenzie's study is two years old; that students continue to read and to consider "best" many of the same books.

McKenzie also categorizes the titles into sixteen classifications such as "Popular Adult Shocker," "Animals," "Comedy," "Romance," "Science Fiction" and "Teenage Life and Problems;" all of these sixteen "types" of books similarly are represented by titles on this study's Best Book List or in students comments about "best" books.

McKenzie notes that in her study of 1974 the most widely read book was The Exorcist but that in Faye Louise Grindstaff's unpublished study in 1975 the most popular book was Jaws which is also the most popular book in this study in 1976. McKenzie also concludes, along with this study's conclusions, that the media greatly influences students' reading interests where many of the

*Arizona English Bulletin, "Adolescent Literature Revisited After Four Years," Volume 18, April 1976, pp. 13-22.

most popular books have been made into movies. She also finds along with this study's findings that most of the polled students read from widely to at least sometimes; a very small minority are nonreaders.

Noma Russell of Gallup-McKinley County Public Schools, New Mexico in "Popular Nonfiction Titles for Adolescents"* polled 389 educators in 1975 and arrived at 20 most popular nonfiction titles, five of which appear on this study's Best Book List and seventeen of which are at least mentioned by Ct. and Al. students as a "best" book.

Russell also categorizes the mentioned books into twenty classifications that parallel closely those categories that I mention in the hobby/interest area of the study; some of the hobby/interest of "best" book titles of this study also appear in Russell's categories, but all of Russell's categories are represented by other titles mentioned in this study, leading one to assume that while the titles may change, basically, adolescents' interests over the years are the same, and that within one interest area are many books published throughout the years that students may enjoy along with the most current bestsellers.

The text Teaching Reading in High School Second Edition by Robert Karlin* lists a number of other research studies with book title lists of the most popular teenage novels. Again the older studies (ie. 1950's) and the studies polling teachers and librarians tend to have significantly less of the same titles on the study's "best" books, hobby/interest books and most popular magazines lists. Thus, at least if teachers and librarians of the polled schools

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*Arizona English Bulletin, "Adolescent Literature Revisited After Four Years," Volume 18, April 1976, pp. 48-59..

*Teaching Reading in High School Second Edition, Robert Karlin, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., New York, 1972., pp. 256-266.

and any teachers and librarians want to learn more about their students' reading interests and habits, they best consult recent studies (within two years of the present), studies polling student responses and, best of all, their students themselves.

It is more difficult to make recommendations to teachers about their English curricula than it is to draw conclusions about student reading interests and habits. Some of the polled teachers note that they know what is best for their students and, particularly, for the college-bound Grade 12 student. Yet I have found from this study that an English classroom will be far from stimulating and enthusiastic if only traditional literature and classics are used. Students of all capabilities and interests of both geographic areas and various types of environments and of both sexes are not far from having the same, basic reading habits and interests. Above all, they cry for the contemporary and the relevant. Somewhere there must be a feasible medium. Perhaps the best recommendation that I can make is simply: the teachers and librarians must decide to what extent they want their English classes and libraries to reflect student reading interests and habits and bearing in mind that with greater reflection of student interest in the curricula comes greater student enthusiasm. And, hopefully, the use of conclusions from a study such as this, can and will help them toward such a goal.

After an involved year of collating questionnaires, conducting interviews,,and writing and typing extensively, I leave the project with a little regret, a little relief and with alot of time now to read the hundreds of books and reading materials that the students have enticed me with.

APPENDIX A

Student Questionnaire

Please check the appropriate blanks. Where a longer answer is asked for, please feel free to use the opposite side of the sheet if necessary.

Age_____ Grade_____ Sex: Male_____ Female_____

What is (are) the best book(s) you have ever read?

What is (are) the worst book(s) you have ever read?

Of the following types of books, which one do you read most frequently?

Poetry	Romance	Youth/Teenagers	
Drama	Sports	Science Fiction	
Nonfiction	Animals	Historical Fiction	
Classical	Religious	Ethnic:	Black
Mystery	Psychological		Indian
Occult	How-to-do		Puerto Rican
Myth	Sex		Chicano
Adventure	War		Others (please specify)
Biography/Autobiography			
Others (please specify)			

Do you like to read? Yes, definitely
Sometimes, depending on the material
Not very much

How many books that are not required in class for school do you read generally in a month?

Do you prefer to read a hardbound or a paperback book? Why?

What are your special hobbies or interests?

What books on any of these hobbies or interests have you read?

Do you ever read comic books? Yes_____ No_____
If so, which one(s)?

Where do you get most of you ideas for the books you read?

Teachers	Newspapers/Magazines reviews
Parents	Bookracks in other stores (drugstores, food
Friends	stores, department stores, etc.)
Librarians	Bestseller Lists
Bookstore	Others (please specify)

What movies have you seen after you have read the same book?

What books have you read after you have seen the same movie?

Do you read a newspaper? Yes No

If so, which one(s)?

How often? Daily Occasionally (one/twice a month)
Weekly Never

What sections of the newspaper do you like to read most?

Front page	Comics	World/National News
Editorial page	Want Ads	"Dear Abby" kind of column
Social page	Advertisements	Amusement (TV / Movies) page
Sports page	General News	Other (please specify)
Financial page	Local News	

What magazines do you read regularly?

Do you personally subscribe to any magazines? (not you parent(s)' subscriptions)? Yes No
If so, which one(s)?

How are you evaluated for reading a book in your English class?

Book report	Quizzes	Test/Exam
Oral report	Papers	Other (please specify)

How do/would you like to be evaluated?

Do you think your school library has a good selection of books?
Yes No If not, where does it need improvement?

Which has a better selection: Town/City library School library

How often do you use these libraries?

Which book clubs do you belong to?

Which book clubs does your school/English class offer?

Does your school ever have any book fairs or book sales?

Yes No

Do you like your English class? Yes No

Why or why not?

Do you like the books that you are required to read in your English class? Yes No

Why or why not?

What suggestions would you offer to make your English class better?

Any additional comments that are relevant to this questionnaire would be appreciated:___

___

Thanks so much for your cooperation!

APPENDIX B

Teacher Questionnaire

What grade(s) do you teach?

What courses do you teach?

How defined is the standard curriculum in which you teach English (especially Grade 12) as outlined by the English department?

How do you choose the books you teach?

Briefly outline how your curriculum is set up: chronologically, thematically, topically, others.

Where do you get your ideas for books you teach, refer to, or suggest to students?

Do you distribute bibliographies to complement the books you teach?

Do you encourage outside reading ie. on vacations? If so, how? For extra credit?

How do you evaluate a book?

Test/Exams	Papers	Oral reports
Quizzes	Book reports	Others (please specify)

Do you teach any paperback books?

Do you teach any classics? Which ones?

Do you use audiovisual media (films, filmstrips, records)when you teach a book? If so, please specify.

Do you use newspapers in your class? If so, how?

Do you use magazines in your class? If so, how?

Do you use comics in your class? If so, how?

Do you use TV in your class? If so, how?

Do you refer in class to TV seen by students outside of class?

Do you refer in class to movies seen by students outside of class?

Do you assign any free-reading ie. assign a project in which students may choose a book of their own interest? If so, please explain.

How do your students react to your classes, curriculum, book choices?

Enthusiastically Moderately Poorly

Would you rather teach a hardbound or paperback book? Why?

Are you satisfied with the material, facilities in your school library? If not, where does it need improvement?

How do you encourage your students to use the school library?

Do you (your school) sponsor any book fairs or sales?

Do you (your school) sponsor any book clubs? If so, which ones?

Curriculum Book list
Extra reading Book list
List of films, audio-visual materials

Please list any titles and relevant information.

Thank you.

APPENDIX C

Librarian Questionnaire

How do you choose new books?

What is most popular with students? Hardbound Paperback

Topics?

How do you regard your school library?

Excellent Good Adequate Fair Poor

What are its strengths?

What are its weaknesses?

Do students use the school library alot?

How? (as a study area, resource center, etc.)

%of paperbacks

% of teenage fiction as opposed to other books

Do you consider the budget adequate? Has it increased within the past few years?

Please list any titles and relevant information, if available:

Curriculum book lists

Extra reading book lists

Film/Audiovisual lists

Paperback book lists

Do you have the following in your library and to what extent are each represented? paperbacks, classics, literature sections, magazines, periodicals, newspaper sections, comics

General comments, Attractiveness, etc. Do you consider your school library/media center attractive, useful, etc. and in what way?

Any further comments pertinent to this questionnaire are appreciated greatly. Thank you.

Abstract

Having spent the 1974-1975 academic year as Central Connecticut State College's representative in the Student Senate Exchange Program to the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, I used this opportunity of foreign study to do some comparisons between American and Canadian school curricula, particularly in the area of student reading interests and habits and in how well the English curriculum meets those interests and habits.

I examined six high schools in total (three within the New Britain, Connecticut area and three within the Edmonton, Alberta area); the three schools were chosen as representatives of urban, suburban and rural environments. I distributed questionnaires concerning student reading interests and habits in and out of school to 680 students in Grade 12 of these schools. I also interviewed and distributed questionnaires to English teachers and school librarians in these schools concerning student reading interests and habits and the extent to which the English department curriculum (departmental and faculty objectives, availability of reading materials and library resources, and methods of teaching) meets these student interests.

Some of the findings of my sixty-three page report are as follows. Eighty-three percent of the polled students do read at least sometimes if not very often where 50% consider themselves lukewarm readers and 33% consider themselves avid readers. Greater percentages of females than males like to read. Suburban students tend to like reading more (particularly the suburban Ct. students) while urban students seem to enjoy reading the least.

Students' favorite books are nonfiction and fiction bestsellers, adolescent literature and books based upon or made into current movies. Jaws was the number one book among the students. Males more than females tend to read book series and hobby/interest books. While classics are not prominent in students' best book list, books that inspired movies are, where 74% of the top 81 best books are movie titles. Canadian students read American, British and Canadian authors but American students note only American and British authors.

Many of the titles that appear on the best book list appear on the worst book list and nearly all the books of the best book list are mentioned as the worst books by other students. Fewer books and fewer votes per title appear on the worst book list indicating that these students have fewer "worst" than "best" books. Shakespeare, whether noted by name or by his works, is the top "worst" book.

The most popular book categories in order of importance are: adventure, mystery, sports, nonfiction, science fiction, romance and youth/teenagers. Males prefer sports and science fiction while females prefer romance and youth/teenagers. Females more than males and the Albertan students more than the Connecticut students prefer racial/ethnic books.

The greatest number of students in Connecticut and in Alberta read one book per month; females read more than males and the Albertan students read more than the Connecticut students.

More than half of the students (57%) prefer a paperback to a hardbound book. Males and Connecticut students are more opinionated than females and Alberta students in their choice of the physical characteristics of their reading material preferring paperbacks more and hardbounds less. Nine of the ten polled teachers of these students use paperback books in their classes.

Nearly all the students list at least one hobby or personal interest and have read books on them.

Friends, librarians, store bookracks, bookstores and teachers are the five most important sources of ideas for books among the high school students.

Students see movies after they have read the same book; they list 176 movies. Many of the 25 most popular titles also appear on the best and the worst book lists, with again Jaws as the first choice in both categories (movies seen after reading the book, books read after seeing the movie). Students also read books to a lesser extent after they have seen the same movie, leading one to assume that fewer movies inspire book reading than books that promote movie viewing. Seven of the ten polled teachers make reference in class not only to current movies but also to the relationship between a particular book and the movie based upon it. All ten teachers use some form of audiovisual media to compliment their lessons. Thus, these teachers realize the impact of the electronic media on their students and reflect this knowledge in their English classes.

More than half of the total number of students read comic books (57%). More Albertan students than Connecticut students read them. Males prefer the action-adventure, horror-mystery and sex-affiliated comic books while females prefer the romance comic books. Only in the suburban and urban Connecticut students do more than half of the students not read comic books. The most popular comic book is Archie. Five of the ten surveyed teachers admit to using the comic book in class to teach satire and other related themes, in lesson planning for ideas, or in allusion to class discussion of required subject matter.

Ninety percent of all the students read the newspaper. Students tend to read "local" newspapers most. The largest number of students (61%) read the newspaper daily with Connecticut students and males reading daily newspapers more. The most popular newspaper sections are the front page, the comics, the local news, the amusements, and the sports page. Eight of the ten surveyed teachers use newspapers in the classroom, again showing that they realize the usefulness of this most popular reading material among the high school students.

At least 75% of the polled students read magazines and while they list 183 titles, the most popular are Time, Seventeen, Sports Illustrated, Newsweek, Reader's Digest and Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine. Regional differences occur and while Albertan students read American magazines, no Connecticut students read Canadian magazines. Sex differences also occur where males prefer news, mechanical, sports and sex

magazines and females prefer teen and women's magazines. While more Connecticut students and males tend to subscribe, most of the students (63%) do not subscribe personally to any magazines. From the subscribers, come 106 magazines, the most popular being Seventeen, Sports Illustrated, Chatelaine/Miss Chatelaine, National Geographic, Tennis and Time. Again more males subscribe to sports, mechanics, outdoors and sex magazines and more females subscribe to teen and women's magazines. Seven of the ten surveyed teachers use the magazine in the classroom, again showing that they realize this popular form of the news media among high school students.

While students respond well to how they are evaluated in reading an assigned book, they have fewer opinions concerning how they would like to be evaluated. While students are evaluated most by test/exams, they prefer papers/essays and book reports equally as well. Nearly all the teachers use papers/essays and tests/exams most to evaluate students.

Slightly more than half of the total number of students (51%) find their school library adequate. Most popular student suggestions for improvement include better selection, more materials in specific subject areas, more bestsellers and improvements everywhere. The Connecticut students and the females are most dissatisfied with their school library, and, thus, list the most suggestions for its improvement. More than three-fourths of the total respondents (77%) favor their town libraries over their school libraries. And while students have definite opinions about improvements, more than three-fourths of the students (77%) do not use the library often. Seven of the ten surveyed teachers and all

four of the surveyed librarians are at least satisfied with their school libraries, although they list suggestions for its improvement. All the teachers encourage students to use the school library but vary in how they promote library study.

Only 4% of the total number of students belong to book clubs, the most popular being the Book of the Month Club, Doubleday Book Club, and Scholastic Book Club. Eight percent of the total number of students (nearly all are from Connecticut) list school-sponsored book clubs, the most popular being the Scholastic Book Club. Nearly all of the students state that their schools do not sponsor any book fairs or sales.

Nearly three-fourths of the total number of students (73%) like and learn much in their English class with more Connecticut students and more females preferring them as well. Most popular reasons for students' liking and disliking their English class center about the teacher, the materials, the methods of teaching and personal bias about interests, English and school.

However, less than half of the students (46%) like the required books of their English classes. More females and Albertan students approve of the required books.

Students suggestions in order to make their English class better center about better teachers, books and materials; more writing, grammar and vocabulary skills; greater personal responsibility in handling subject matter and assignments; better methods of handling materials; and better means of evaluation.

The clearest, most evident and certainly most accurate deduction concerning these students' favorite books, reading materials and interests is that high school students do read and they read very widely, that no one book or material is the favorite of most, and that this uniqueness and variety shows more beautifully how rich and how well used the current reading market is to high school students.

Top Best Books*

JAWS	51	THE CHRYSALIDS	
THE OUTSIDERS	25	JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL	
THE EXORCIST	24	MACBETH	
HELTER SKELTER	23	THE OTHER	
THE HOBBIT		A SEPARATE PEACE	
ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST	21	THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW	
THE GODFATHER	18	BALL FOUR	5
LORD OF THE RINGS		CALL OF THE WILD	
GONE WITH THE WIND	16	DEATH BE NOT PROUD	
ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH		DUNE	
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD	15	A FAREWELL TO ARMS	
THE CATCHER IN THE RYE	14	FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON (CHARLIE)	
THE HOLY BIBLE	13	GO ASK ALICE	
SERPICO	12	NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA	
SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE		RICH MAN, POOR MAN	
ALIVE	11	SUMMER OF '42	
BLESS THE BEASTS AND THE CHILDREN		ZORBA THE GREEK	
PAPILLON		THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN	4
SYBIL		AGATHA CHRISTIE novels	
ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT	10	BRAVE NEW WORLD	
THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA		THE CRUCIBLE	
SUNSHINE	9	DIBS - IN SEARCH OF SELF	
BRIAN'S SONG	8	THE GREAT GATSBY	
LORD OF THE FLIES		THE HAPPY HOOKER	
QB VII		MR. AND MRS. BO JO JONES	
THE DAY OF THE JACKAL	7	MRS. MIKE	
EXODUS		ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF IVAN DENISOVITCH	
LOVE STORY		2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY	
1984		WEST SIDE STORY	
TRILOGY		WUTHERING HEIGHTS	
AIRPORT	6	THE AMBASSADOR	3
THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE		THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN	
CHRISTY		BLACK LIKE ME	
		CAT'S CRADLE	

Top Best Books* - Continued

CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY	3	I AM THIRD	3
THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK		JANE EYRE	
DR. ZHIVAGO		MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN	
EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS books		THE REINCARNATION OF PETER PROUD	
THE GOOD EARTH		THE SCARLET LETTER	
THE GREAT ESCAPE		THE STING	
THE HARRAD EXPERIMENT		TO SIR WITH LOVE	

Top Worst Books*

HEART OF DARKNESS	17	THE SECRET SHARER	
THE AMBASSADOR	16	STORY AND STRUCTURE (text)	
SHAKESPEARE	15	A FAREWELL TO ARMS	4
HARLEQUIN ROMANCES	11	HAMLET	
THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA	10	THE HARDY BOYS	
THE CATCHER IN THE RYE	9	I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN	
DEATH OF A SALESMAN		LORD OF THE FLIES	
THE ELECTRIC KOOL-AID ACID TEST		LOVE STORY	
THE GREAT GATSBY		1984	
AS I LAY DYING	8	THE PEARL	
THE SCARLET LETTER		BILLY BUDD	3
THE EXORCIST	7	THE FISHERMAN AND THE SEA	
JAWS		GO ASK ALICE	
A TALE OF TWO CITIES		JULIUS CAESAR	
WUTHERING HEIGHTS		THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE	
ANIMAL FARM	5	PRESIDENT FU-MANCHU	
BRAVE NEW WORLD		SLEEP 2,3,4	
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN		TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD	

*The numbers that follow the book titles indicate the number of responses from the total six schools. Book titles without numbers take the number count from the book title above them.